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THE PAULINE IDEA OF FAITH

In an able and scholarly book Dr. Hatch has made a contribution of real value to the study of New Testament theology.¹ His object is a limited but highly important one—to examine the Pauline idea of faith with a view to determining its relation to the mystery-religions. In the first chapter he deals with the historical antecedents of the idea, showing that in the Old Testament and the later Jewish literature faith consists essentially in trust in Jahveh. This conception of trust is peculiar to Hebrew religion and lies at the root of the later Christian doctrine. Dr. Hatch then proceeds to discuss the Pauline teaching on the subject of faith. He collects and analyzes the various references in the Epistles and makes it clear that for Paul faith is the central principle of religion and the spring of all moral action. Faith as he conceives it has its direct object in Christ, but the religious attitude involved is fundamentally the Hebraic one. At the same time there enters into the Pauline conception an element which is foreign to Hebrew thought. Paul thinks of faith as a mystical condition, and can speak indifferently of being “in faith” and being “in Christ.” In the concluding chapter faith is considered in its relation to pagan forms of religion. It is shown that in classical paganism the religious attitude demanded is not one of trust, but merely one of reverence, expressing itself in stated rites and observances. The oriental cults made occasional approaches to the idea of faith, but faith as they understood it has nothing of the moral significance which it bears in Paul. On the burning question of the indebtedness of Paul to the cults Dr. Hatch arrives at a guarded and probably a sound conclusion. Granting that Paul was influenced by the cults in the direction of mysticism and sacramentalism, he considers it misleading to speak of Pauline Christianity as a “mystery-religion.” Resting as it does on the principle of faith, it belongs, in its intrinsic character, to the sphere of psychology and ethics, not to that of mystery and magic.

As an attempt to place the Pauline idea of faith in its historical relations the book deserves the attention of all New Testament students. The clear discrimination between the Hebraic attitude to God and that which obtained in pagan religions is particularly valuable. It has never, to our knowledge, been pointed out before that the idea of faith was native to Hebrew piety and has no real parallels elsewhere. We

¹ *The Pauline Idea of Faith in Its Relation to Jewish and Hellenistic Religion.* By William Henry Paine Hatch. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1917. 92 pages. \$1.00.

could have wished that the author had completed his survey by a more adequate account of Philo's doctrine of faith. He might also have dealt more fully with the process whereby faith in God was transformed for Paul into faith in Christ. A word of emphatic praise is due to the exegetical work in which the book abounds. A study of this kind necessitates the detailed analysis of many difficult passages, and in this part of his task Dr. Hatch is always thorough and well balanced, and in most cases convincing. The question of Paul's relation to the cults has given rise, of late years, to much loose and ill-digested criticism, and it is a pleasure to meet with a treatment of it which is marked throughout by competent scholarship and theological insight.

E. F. SCOTT

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BRIEF MENTION

OLD TESTAMENT

TRUYOLS, A. F. *Breve introducción a la crítica textual del A.T.* [Estudios de crítica textual y literaria, Fasc. I]. Roma: Pontificio Instituto Bíblico, 1917. xii+152 pages.

Every work that endeavors to popularize the methods by which scholars are arriving at the true and full meaning of the Scriptures is welcome. It is gratifying to see that the pontifical Biblical Institute at Rome is willing to publish a Spanish work that begins at the right place to ascertain the significance of biblical criticism. This little work has happily made use of the best material, especially on the Books of Samuel. The author treads cautiously but firmly along the path to a sane textual critical method, leading his reader through: I. "Importance and Necessity of Textual Criticism"; II. "Actual Condition of the Massoretic Text"; III. "Means of the Restoration of the Text"; IV. "Principles That Obtain in Regular Textual Criticism." Each of these divisions is amply illustrated by quotations and examples from the material of the Old Testament.

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TRUYOLS, A. F. *I Sam. 1-15, Crítica textual* [Estudios de crítica textual y literaria, Fasc. II]. Roma: Pontificio Instituto Bíblico, 1917. vii+93 pages.

The test of the principles advocated in Fasc. I is here applied. Driver, Dhorme, Schlögel, Kittel, and H. P. Smith came into the consideration of the author while working out his textual conclusions. With praiseworthy learning and careful distinctions he makes use of Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac, as well as the Massoretic Text, in determining the true text in the passages discussed. This is a step in advance for the modern scholarship of Spain, whose predecessors gave us the Complutensian Polyglot Bible.

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